



Aakash Nihalani's tape art in New York.

Photo: © 2010 Aakash Nihalani

Street art in perspective: The urban geometry of Aakash Nihalani

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- By [Jake Schmidgall](#), Minneapolis Urban Arts Examiner

Street art is ephemeral by its very nature. What's thrown up one night may be painted over, scraped away, or torn down the next. Without the permission of a city or the support of a neighborhood, the experiments of street artists often have to take deceptively simple forms that relate strongly to their surrounding environment and make a quick and deep impact on the viewer. Toying with perspective is an excellent means to achieve this impact, and New York's Aakash Nihalani is making his name forcing New Yorkers to question what they see on an otherwise hum-drum walk to work.

Nihalani's fluorescent tape creates isometric squares and rectangles on sidewalks, joins them together between building columns, and combines them to form complex, interlocking chains that adorn everything from building walls to stop signs. "For however briefly, I am trying to offer people a chance to step into a different New York than they are used to seeing," Nihalani says on his website. "My work is created in reaction to what we readily encounter in our daily lives: sidewalks and doorways, buildings and bricks. I'm just connecting the dots differently to make my own picture."

Nihalani's use of fluorescent tape in lieu of paint offers specific advantages for the street artist. The lines he needs are already uniformly wide and thick, needing only to be placed correctly. Nimble hands and keen spacial awareness allow Nihalani to create his pieces efficiently and quickly when inspiration strikes. "All execution of a piece is done on site with little or no planning," he says.

Invariably, of course, Nihalani's pieces are taken down just as quickly as he puts them up, but Nihalani isn't discouraged. This is the nature of street art, and the ease with which a piece can be created leads him to try and inspire his fellow city-dwellers to make their own. "We all need the opportunity to see the city more playfully, as a world dominated by the interplay of very basic color and shape. Others need to see that they can create too, connecting their own dots, in their own places."

[Click here](#) to check out more of Aakash Nihalani's work on his website.